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ABSTRACT

A workshop model focuses on using lesser-known resources to document black family history and lineage. Although designed for use in North Carolina, this model can be adapted for use in any state or community. Following an introduction which summarizes the workshop format is an overview which outlines the goals, objectives, and focus of the workshop. Then an essay on the traditions of the Western family traces the history of family organization in Western civilization and places the black family in the context of this historical development. A second essay, "Adaptions and Accommodations," discusses kinship and black family structure under slavery and after emancipation. "A Recipe for a Hip Black Life" provides a vehicle for encouraging black pride. "Ten Steps for Rooting Out the Past" presents guidelines for conducting family history research. A worksheet allows participants to chart their own personal history. Several charts illustrate a family tree, kinship diagraming, and North Carolina counties with genealogical sources on blacks. The model concludes with a two-page bibliography. (LP)

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GRASSROOTS GENEALOGY

Exploring, Documenting and Preserving

Black Family History

A Pilot Workshop

Directed by

Tommie Morton Young

With Presentations by Selected Scholars

Sponsored by: Afro-American
Family History Project

Assisted by: North Carolina
Humanities Committee, A
Program of the National
Endowment of the Humanities

Held at the

Southeast Branch of the
Greensboro Public Library

January 28-31, 1981

February 9 and 10, 23, 1981

Greensboro, North Carolina

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AFRO-AMERICAN FAMILY HISTORY PROJECTS

Grassroots Genealogy Workshops

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- Drs. Wyatt and Sarah Kirk - Professors of Psychology and Social Welfare,
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North Carolina

ADDENDUM

Subsequent Grassroots Genealogy Workshops held in 1980-81

Durham/Orange Counties St. Joseph AME Church Durham, N. C.	February 16-18, 1981
Guilford County North Carolina A&T State University Greensboro, N. C.	November 10-13, 1980
Pasquotank County Elizabeth City State University Elizabeth City, N. C.	March 11-13, 1981
Rockingham County St. Paul United Methodist Church Reidsville, N. C.	April 27-29, 1981
New Hanover County Wilmington, N. C.	May 4-6, 1981
Warren County Radio Station WVSP Warrenton, N. C.	June 11-13, 1981

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INTRODUCTION

The Grassroots Genealogy Workshops are a series of dialogues, instruction and presentations concerned with black family history and lineage. The workshops focus on the lesser known and used bodies of materials that document black family presences prior to 1865. While some research has concentrated on these selected documents in constructing the slave family as a form, the Genealogy Workshops focus on family lineage with attention to individual descendants and forebearers.

The major goals of the workshops are: to increase the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the black family; to deal with erroneous information and fallacious perceptions about the black man and his family in Africa and America, and to aid the mainstream black American in the discovery of and use of obscure records and documents that have relevance to his origins and predescendancy.

The workshops have been assisted by the North Carolina Humanities Committee and one has been sponsored by the Department of Archives and History of the Division of Human Resources of the State of North Carolina. The workshops are held in schools, churches, public libraries, and community centers in the state of North Carolina. Counties selected as sites of workshops include those with significant bodies of materials on blacks which were maintained in the years prior to 1865.

The format of the workshops include presentations by humanists who address relevant topics described in the Workshop Contents. Group discussions follow the presentations. Films and visuals are used in the process of the workshops. Field trips climax the experiences. Field sites include local court houses, cemeteries, special collections of public agencies, plantation sites, historic

landmarks, museums and private collections.

Throughout the workshops, the Director conducts a segment of each program that functions to "pull together" the theoretical aspects and the practical elements in genealogical searching.

The workshop idea grew out of the growing demands and interests of Afro-Americans to know more about their origins, historical events that have shaped their lives, and records that confirm their past presences. The author of the workshop idea undertook to develop the idea subsequent to an extended field study experience in minority genealogy that included an encounter that declared that the black family was practically non-existent prior to 1865. The North Carolina Humanities Committee accepted and supported the workshop idea and assisted the pilot workshop which was held in January and February of 1980. Responses to the pilot workshop revealed nationwide and some international interest in such activity, and participants were enrolled from as far away as Texas. Requests for assistance in developing local workshops have been presented as empirical evidence of the relevance of the workshops to the black community.

While an Ad Hoc Committee on the Afro-American Family History Project initiated the workshops in North Carolina, any organization in a state that has a Humanities Committee as a program of the National Endowment of the Humanities may apply for assistance in implementing Grassroots Genealogy Workshops that Explore, Document, and Preserve Afro-American Family History.

Tommie Morton Young

GOALS

To increase awareness, understanding and knowledge of the Afro-American family and to aid individuals in relating information to self, self perception and social experience.

OBJECTIVES

To explore American history in context with the black experience

To examine the impact of social forces on the evolution of the Afro-American family

To explore ways that family history relates to the sense of self and self identity

To provide opportunities for dialogue and discussion on issues related to past and contemporary phenomena of the Afro-American social experience

To introduce participants to family history sources with special reference to resources unique to black history experience

To assist the participant in constructing a family tree and undertaking individual family interests

To generate family histories for possible inclusion in genealogical records of American library's and special collections

WORKSHOP FOCUS

1. The Heritage of the Black Family: Pre-European Family Patterns and Traditions
2. Traditions of the Western Family: Social Forces and the Black Presence
3. Adaptations and Accommodations: The Afro-American Family, Bond and Free
4. Role of Family in the Development of a Sense of Self-Identity: Self and Family Theories and Contemporary Phenomena
5. Sources and Resources: "Putting the Pieces Together" — Tracing and Documenting Family Roots

TRADITIONS OF THE WESTERN FAMILY: SOCIAL
FORCES AND THE BLACK PRESENCE

by

Earl C. Thorpe
Professor of History
North Carolina Central University

The end of the rule of the medieval feudal, aristocracy and the replacement by that of the modern bourgeoisie, were central factors in establishing the traditions of the modern Western family. There is a sense in which this development made it inevitable that there would be in North America and other places, the presence in large numbers of both white and black people. In the book, From Sun Down to Sun Up, George Rawick has an excellent chapter on the origins of European racism. Here he points out that the work ethics and other demands of the new ruling class were so revolutionary that they forced a redefinition of work, of marriage, sex, sin, childhood, leisure and play, and even a new definition of insanity. Clearly, the family was at center stage where these changes are concerned. The interests of the new ruling class were in domination and in monetary profits which constituted the chief force behind these changes. Although, to the masses of people the medieval family suffered more through such things as caste, disease, superstition, and insecurity wrought by political instability, families had greater stability than the family of today, and family members were closer physically to each other and otherwise--closer to the natural world around them. The modern cult of romantic love did not exist. During Europe's medieval period marital stability was enhanced by the Lord-vassal relationship which in most cases permeated the entire society. While modern man can think of debts owed

as monetary commitments, medieval Europeans thought of debts as personal services owed. Reciprocally, a person survived above and below each other. As it was well known, even the medieval organization of the Catholic Church followed a similar pattern.

In medieval marriages the modern world's confusion about the roles and duties of husbands and wives did not exist. Also marital and family stabilities were enhanced through Europe's Middle Ages by the greater power of the church in the area of civil life and the fact that the Catholic Church considered matrimony to be a holy sacrament; a bond made by God that only He could bend. Not only was the modern world less religious, but countries in which protestant denominations prevailed such as the United States, these countries generally hold that marriage is a civil contract not a holy sacrament. George Rawick declared that while Europeans were engaged in redefinition of all aspects of their life, they had increased contact with blacks whose style is closer to the old than to the new--European. Thus, the Europeans were assessing their old values. Their new world view led them to reject the newly encountered African. Modern Europeans saw their old way of life as the Dark Ages, the age of barbarism. They declared that Africans are barbarians and savages. Again it is clear that the new ruling class encouraged these attitudes and practices of institutions associated with them for obvious reasons with domination and economic and psychological gains.

The bourgeoisie came to power because its economic outlook and practices raised productivity to levels that were impossible under the feudal system. The new economic outlook in practice, demands that greater freedom should be given to the individual entrepreneur as he sought to exhaust the profit motive in his endeavors. Connected with the constantly growing science and technology this ideological practice became the most powerful force for changing the

medieval and other aspects of the lives of humans which the world has ever known. In coming to power the bourgeoisie, along with all other institutions the family would never be the same again. Although in different ways to be sure, the lives of members of both black and white families would be affected by the ruling class's quest for domination. As we know there have been different stages in the economic development of this social system and therefore, different stages in the development of the modern Western family. To bend and shape the interest and demands of the new ruling bourgeoisie meant, therefore, that institutions such as the church, the school, the military and all others had to conform in form, if not in substance, to the constant efforts to rationalize and maximize the profits of the leading entrepreneurs. Established family structure and practices had to absorb such shock emanating mainly from the market place as the enclosure movement, urbanization, increase use and importance of many; inflation, mass migration, labor away from home by men and women and children, uncontrollable periods of unemployment, growing attitudes of extreme individualism, lower esteem for life and personal worth along with exalted esteem for material possessions. In all of this blacks were on the bottom, victims of the grossest professions--exploitations and racism. Although we must recognize the dialectical development here, the worst of all this led to Eldridge Cleaver's characterization of "Soul on Ice." Emphasis here is for the ruling class on "the ice." While Malcom X characterized its perpetrators as the devil, the myth of all this is the story of the development of the black family where themes of epic adjustments, protest and survival are dominant. Bureaucrats produce contrary movements and with emphasis on racism, nationalism, materialism, technological domination and project techniques. Movement such as trade unionism, various forms of socialism, psychoanalytic psychology, feminism, internationalism, and the romantic revolt also have relevance where the black family is concerned.

While casualties have been overly abundant, the black family in America has had much greater success in its efforts of adjustment accommodations, protest and survival than most persons, scholarly and lay, have known or admitted. To most, under the influence of scholars such as Robert A. Park and E. Franklin Frazier, the United States has stressed too much of what we see as negatives or evidence of pathology in the black family. Park viewed the white middle class family as a proper model. Here the most valuable criticism may not be of the emphasis on such themes or prolegitimacy, immorality, matriarchy, desertion, and lack of family discipline, but rather the definition, meaning and consequences grown from the wrong definitions. And consequences derived from using a white model of inadequate knowledge of the black experience. White, Park, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan see life as white. The essence is in Moynihan's book The Negro Family that causes for national action. The same is true of the pages of black family in Gunnar Myrdal's An American Dilemma. In this book black families in white America inherently present an excellent statement on the treatment of Negro families in American scholarship to 1968; statement which must be supplemented by still more recent volumes by Hildebrandt Pittman and others. The black family has been studied in terms of such things as movement in a racist society from slavery toward freedom. From a rural turf to an urban setting. This is essentially the framework of Frazier's magnum opus, *Stolen Land, Stolen People*, by comparing black and white families and studying the impact of bourgeois white values on the mind and lives of blacks. We do not yet have nearly enough studies of the black family from the projections of dialectical and historical materialism; such that will incorporate and move us beyond even those analysis. Based on American black rationalism and world Pan-Africanism, such studies will help us to see more clearly the key pertinent questions of

members of black families and not just those that are about such things as black values, vis-a-vis white values. These key pertinent questions will reveal awareness. It is probably more important to ask whether members of black families know the class which they belong and whether they are committed to struggle until this class is in control of shaping its daily life and destiny. I am also convinced that there is a great need for studies in family life of Afro-Americans which utilize the prospective of psycho-analytic psychology approach. There is indeed a great need for all humanistic and social science studies to use this prospective. Recently, I was impressed with this need while reading similar writings by Robert Staples on the black family. Like far many other scholars, Staples based his explanations of black family life too much on behavior which is casual and learned. Staples even treats homosexuality, exclusively as learned behavior. White environmental factors have certainly been important in influencing sexual and family behavior--fantasies and what psycho-analytic oriented scholars call character structure are also very important here. Staples and far too many persons who write on black family life, ignore these latter factors. Although modified by historical reality terms such as repression, projection, interjection, free editorial mother, castration, complex and pleasure, and reality principles have great relevance where all family life is concerned. Thorpe and his psycho-history presents excellent studies of the Jewish family from the prospective of depth psychology. Last October, I read a paper in New York entitled "Black and Jewish History" in Journal of Psycho-History. I could take the issue and express the desire to see the black family and the black experience generally studied from this prospective. Just as the beginning of the modern times there was a redefinition and restructuring of the total lifestyle of occidental man and what can be called

cultural non-repression to one of repression: (What McKeivin calls tribal movement from tribal to Gutenberg man). Today we are living through another age of redefinition and restructuring which may be equally revolutionary. Although again, violent tendencies are obvious. Today, we most frequently find growing exalting of the group over individual personhood over property, services over profit; humanity over such things as race, creed, color or sex and life over death. Black Americans were forcibly kept out of the mainstream that exalted opposites of these recent tendencies. Yet blacks have always been in the vanguard of those who struggled for more in a materialist oriented world. Let the struggle continue! Let us try to be worthy of our many heroes who struggled and to whom we owe so much. Some of whom will lead us in struggles right here in Greensboro. Then the era of mental slavery, in a sense which members of black families have struggled with and without considerable success against the racist definition which larger society uses against them will end. Indeed this struggle is the central theme of black history. Too often Afro-Americans have uncritically accepted the best and worst of European family traditions and influences. Always the black world has modified and reformed what it has reviewed. Also Afro-Americans always have been more critical and creative that is generally recognized. This week as we stand on the threshold of black history month, 1980, I hope that our celebration event will be made from the best in these contemporary redefinitions and restructuring. Too often in the past we have housed too much on near geniuses or supertalents among Afro-Americans such as Benjamin Banneker, Charles Drew, Marian Anderson, Neil Gene Price, George Washington Carver, Daniel Hale Williams, Elijah McCoy, Jack Johnson, Joe Lewis, Muhammad Ali, W. E. B. Dubois-- with too little emphasis on the great importance of the masses of blacks who are average or ordinary. We too easily, forget that it is the masses of the

people who make history and who are the real creators of culture. Also, too often we say to young blacks that respect and self-esteem are things which must be earned when we ought to stress much more the extent to which these are not earned but conferred and chosen. I believe the best way to get and keep self-love and self-esteem is to choose them to crown yourself with them as an act of intelligent deliberate choice. No one can give to a race, nation, or individual self-respect and self-esteem. Although they are best acquired by deliberate choice, negatively oriented others can make this choice more difficult for persons who possess weak and fragile egos. We must begin the occasion of black history most and all other occasions to teach black boys and girls especially. Each one of them already, right now, is as worthy of as much self-esteem and self respect as anyone who has ever lived; one of my quarrels with the second televised series of Alex Haley's Roots. It is my belief that there was too much basing of self-respect and self esteem on material, educational, and other achievements, rather than on simple, personal joy. Because geniuses and super talents are rare among all people most black boys and girls are not going to be Charles Drews, Marian Andersons, George Washington Carvers, Leontine Prices. Yet every black boy and girl is entitled to every bit as much self respect and self-esteem as any of these. It will help the black man's son who felt this way about themselves if all of us who have been more fortunate and who have had a few more privileges to view and create them this way. Self-respect and self-esteem are yours by choice. They have to be sustained but not earned. Many members of black families need to be told this often. Robert Staples has pointed out that in Africa prior to the modern slave trade, the kinship group formed the basis of African family life and all of the societal functions were organized and controlled by it. Oppressions and exploitations in this country forced most blacks to view one

another in the extended family image. Since 1865, the ravages of continued racism and poverty have been and still are factors in keeping the kinship group alive and this is very important even the temporary shortages of black males has significant relevance where the extended family relationship is concerned. We must be seriously concerned about one another and help each other in all possible ways. Always the black family and black church have been important institutions. They have been rivaled only by the school house. The key or main word in the Christian religion is love. In a culture in which too many of the majority culture groups are seen making goods out of money; status symbols including machine oriented technology and dominating use of power, blacks are the largest group in the nation that has kept some semblance of the real meaning of the word love. Love has been the key word in both the black church and the black family. Our hope for survival and growth in this and other nations also may well rest on the extent to which we can struggle successfully for a word in which for all people the word love can have real meaning.

ADAPTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS: AFRO-AMERICAN FAMILY, BOND AND
FREE

BY

Roscoe E. Leonard
Department of History
Southern University

"IF MEN AND WOMEN ARE IN CHAINS, ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, THEN FREEDOM
IS ENDANGERED EVERYWHERE." John F. Kennedy

"FAR BETTER IT IS TO DARE MIGHTY THINGS, TO WIN GLORIOUS TRIUMPHS,
EVEN THOUGH CHECKERED BY FAILURE, THAN TO TAKE RANK WITH SPIRITS
WHO NEITHER ENJOY MUCH NOR SUFFER MUCH, BECAUSE THEY LIVE IN THE
GRAY TWILIGHT THAT KNOWS NOT VICTORY NOR DEFEAT." Theodore Roosevelt

The Afro-American Family has come into focus again today because of its
significance and importance to the American way of life as it relates to those
segments of society, economic and politics. Who among us today can deny or
forget our being in chains, dared to do mighty things, doomed for failure--
suffered much and always expected to be defeated?

Someone once pointed out that the contribution which a nation makes to
human history may be judged not only by how it uses its economic and politi-
cal power, but how it treats its least favored citizens. It is in this
context that we address, in the following analysis, the problems of a
"least favored" population in the United States--the Afro-American Family.

Black family structure has received considerable attention recently
from social scientists. There are numerous field studies and interpretative
works which make important contributions to the sociological and anthropolo-
gical literature on kinship, marriage, family and household organization,
and social structure. A review of this literature reveals a wide variety
of interests, approaches, methods, and conclusions. This survey does not
pretend to be an exhaustive and critique of the entire literature, because

of space limitations. Competent reviews of several approaches are readily available. In this paper I will present the basic frame of reference for several important approaches, indicate their accomplishments and limitations, note significant results, point out any postulates or theories that can be tested, and indicate what I consider the most fruitful approach for future research.

A considerable range of family forms and types has been found among Afro-American groups. Early in the history of social science interest in these groups, it was observed that an unusual type of household organization had a wide distribution in Afro-American societies. In this type, members of a household or domestic group are related primarily through a series of consanguineal ties, and the mother-child bond is much more important for the structure of domestic relations than the weaker, less durable marital bond. Correlated with the dominance of the mother there is often a large proportion of consensual unions and a correspondingly high illegitimacy rate (by current Western standards), a marginal role for the husband-father, and a large proportion of domestic households headed by females.

The importance of women, and especially mothers, in this type of family and household organization has led to the characterization of Black family structure as maternal (King 1945; Frazier 1939), mother centered (T. Parsons 1949), matri-centered (Firth and Djamour 1956) or matri-focal (R. T. Smith 1956). The Moynihan Report (Office of Policy Planning and Research, U. S. Department of Labor 1965) describes the Negro family in the United States as matriarchal. R. T. Smith's terms, matrifocal and matrifocality, have been adopted by a number of workers (Kreiselman 1958; Greenfield, 1959; Otterbein 1963; Kunstadter 1963) and will be used here. Solien's term, consanguineal household, refers more to the kinship constitution of a domestic group than

to the structure of domestic relations.¹

Field studies show at least two significant forms of the family are present in Afro-American societies--the conjugal family of mated pair and children, and the matrifocal family. The conjugal family resembles the family units commonly found in the United States and Europe. Perhaps because it is considered the natural or normal grouping the conjugal family has received little attention in studies of the Black family structure. But the matrifocal family is considered unusual, even aberrant, disorganized or pathological, and presents a problem for social scientists. In societies dominated by white Christians the Afro-American family in its matrifocal variety has come under moral condemnation (see M. H. Smith 1955), and scholars have been enlisted to help governmental agencies formulate social welfare plans for correcting the "aberration," re-aligning the "disorganization," curing the "pathology," and changing the matrifocal family form to the proper conjugal type (see Simey 1946; Henriques 1953; Clarke 1957; Office of Policy Planning and Research, U. S. Department of Labor 1965).

The stereotype of the Black family has been brought into question by recent investigations. Not only do we find several different forms of the family in Afro-American societies, but we also find that the matrifocal family is not peculiar to Afro-American societies. This type of family organization is widely distributed in Latin America (Adams 1960; Goode 1960), and has been documented in other groups occupying a low socio-economic status in western societies. And some Afro-American societies, including the one which was studied in the Choco of northwestern Colombia, do not have the matrifocal

¹James Whittington, "Some Approaches to Afro-American Family Structure," Journal of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Vol. XIX, 1972, p. 18.

family as a statistically significant family form (Whittington 1971).

Different investigators have used at least seven different approaches and modes of explanation in their analysis of the New World Negro family. Emphasis has been on the conditions and factors which might explain the "problematical" features of the Black family system (matrifocality, consensual unions, female household heads). Explanatory factors include:

1. Survival of West African patterns (Herskovits 1937; 1941; 1943; 1945; 1947; 1948; 1951).
2. The social structure of slavery and plantation life (Frazier 1939; King 1945).
3. Influence of European customs (Arensberg 1957; Greenfield 1959).
4. Ecological conditions (Manners and Steward 1953).
5. Demographic variables (Solien 1959; Kunstadter 1963).
6. Socioeconomic status of males (R. I. Smith 1956; Clarke 1957).
7. Type of mating system (M. G. Smith 1962a).²

Early discussion of Black family organization produced a controversy as to whether the form of the family (especially the consensual mating and matrifocal household organization) can be best explained as resulting from the survival of African patterns, or whether this peculiar form was generated by the social structure of slavery and plantation life. The most prolific protagonist of the African survival viewpoint was Melville J. Herskovits, who pointed out, in articles and books spanning more than a generation, a basic similarity between the pattern of consensual mating and matrifocal household organization observed among New World Negroes and the polygynous family of West African Negro societies.

Frazier (1939) proposed that Negro family organization in the United

²Ibid., p. 19.

States, where it shows a high proportion of consensual mating and matri-focality, is a direct result of the social conditions of slavery and plantation life. Whereas Herskovits believed that African patterns could survive despite slavery, Frazier and numerous other workers reject the survival hypothesis and insist that capture, detention, transportation, sale, and dispersal of slaves, as well as the conditions of slavery and plantation life, made survival of African patterns virtually impossible. Basic assumptions of this approach are that capture, transportation and enslavement stripped the black man of his African culture heritage, and that the plantation system (at least in the United States) did not provide institutional arrangements which would support African survivals. Frazier and many others argue that "The slave plantation of the South is the place of origin of the Negro maternal family" (King 1945: 101).

The historical approach must begin with the realities of each local situation, rather than from assumptions of similarity. This is especially true for western Colombia (West 1957) and the Pacific coast of Guerrero in Mexico (Aguirre Beltran 1957), where slaves were imported primarily for labor in gold mining and cattle herding, respectively, rather than plantation agriculture.³ To determine the effects of slavery as an institution on the systems of mating and family relationships, we must examine each local situation for the facts that are likely to bear upon the development of these relations.

As we look at the Black family, what has it had to adapt to? What choices did we have? Some ideas are as follows:

- A. Forced to accept the Western way of life contrary to our African background (vis-a-vis African slavery).

³Ibid., p. 22.

- B. Accept the Christian Religion which is Grand and Glorious, however, the African had a Religion.
- C. Adapt to slavery and brutality.
- D. Destruction of our heritage.
- E. Deracinization.
- F. Acceptance of forced segregation.
- G. Plans of freedom by Lincoln A. Johnson and Reconstruction.
- H. Forced myths
 - 1. The color line
 - 2. Theory of inferiority
 - 3. Lackadaisical
 - 4. Wanting to marry whites
 - 5. Permissive role
 - 6. Over sexed
 - 7. Dark skin is evil
 - 8. Blacks are superstitious

When one has to consider this brief list of adaptations and myths, certainly it becomes frightening, misleading, misbelieving so much so that anyone could wonder how there are any remnants of a Black family. A nation is compelled to realize, in the face of all of these calamities, it goes without saying that the survival of the Afro-American family has to be one of the strongest in the world.

In the studies of the Black family, one of the most serious deficiencies has been the concentration on matrifocality and the relative lack of attention to other forms of family organization present in these societies. Not only do we find several different forms of the family in most Afro-American societies, and Afro-American societies in which this particular form is not statistically significant, but there are variants of the matrifocal family in societies that are not Afro-American. Therefore the stereotype should be discarded.

Matrifocality as a form of domestic family organization is, of course, a legitimate subject for study. But it is the family system in its totality, including all the alternative forms actually present, and their developmental

processes, that should be the object of study. It is impossible to understand the reasons for the appearance of the matrifocal family form without understanding the factors which generate the other forms.

Another serious deficiency has been the emphasis upon matrifocality as an "aberrant," "diviant," "disorganized," or "pathological" form of family organization. The family is a social institution with which humans attempt to survive in their environment. The family has a considerable degree of flexibility with which it responds to individual and group needs. We should properly study different family forms as adaptive mechanisms rather than as social ills or evils. The problem is how, when, and under what conditions does the family vary in form and function; rather than why does it not correspond to our preconceived ideal or model.⁴

If one was to take a quick brief look at North Carolina slavery in an isolated county (Onslow) from 1790 to 1860, some very revealing facts would be noted.

In an 1962 article, Edward Phifer helped to illustrate the value of local histories of slavery in the ante-bellum South. His examination of the institution in a single county in west North Carolina supported the thesis that generalizations made concerning the nature of plantation bondage may not apply, without modification, to other patterns of slavery. Phifer agreed that "slavery throughout the South had a certain uniformity, but it was far from complete."⁵ A study of slavery in Onslow County, in southeastern North Carolina, helps to support Phifer's conclusion.

⁴Ibid, p. 36.

⁵Edward Phifer, "Slavery in Microcosm: Burke County, North Carolina," Journal of Southern History, XXVIII (May 1962), 139.

Although there are existing studies of slavery in North Carolina, the life and affairs of the slaves and slaveholders of ante-bellum Onslow County are largely an untold chapter of the "peculiar institution" in that state. Undoubtedly the county has not attracted the serious student, because it does not rate as "typical." Other persons for the neglect of Onslow County slavery however, must be noted. Primary materials such as diaries, plantation records and journals are not available. Moreover, the county was without a newspaper until after the First World War. Nevertheless, there are more available sources than have been utilized heretofore by scholars.

POPULATION OF ONSLOW COUNTY, 1790-1860

CENSUS YEAR	TOTAL	WHITE	FREE BLACK	SLAVE
1790	5,387	3,555	84	1,748
1830	7,814	4,569	101	3,144
1850	8,283	5,003	172	3,108
1860	8,856	5,195	162	3,409

Sources: "First Federal Census, 1790, Onslow County," in Clark, ed., State Records, 857-71; Fifth Census, 1830 (Washington, 1832), 90-91; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850 (Washington, 1853), 308; Eighth Census of the United States in 1860 (Washington, 1865), 236.

Onslow County was located in what the state historians have called the "eastern plantation regime,"⁶ but it did not fit well into the classification. There were a few plantations in the county, but cotton and tobacco were very low on the scale of staple crops before the 1840's. Tobacco did not become an important commercial crop there until near the end of the

⁶Rosser Howard Taylor, Slaveholding in North Carolina: An Economic View (Chapel Hill, 1926), pp. 1-2.

nineteenth century. And contrary to Rosser Howard Taylor's argument in his study of economic aspects of slavery in North Carolina, the slaves of Onslow were not moving southwestward during the last three decades before the Civil War.⁷ If North Carolina were one of the slave selling states, Onslow was not one of the state's selling counties.

Onslow was formed in 1734 from New Hanover County.⁸ It was named in honor of Arthur Onslow, who for more than thirty years was speaker of the British House of Commons. It was bounded by the Atlantic Ocean and Pender, Duplin, Jones and Carteret Counties.⁹ The act which provided for its creation stated that the county should be "bounded to the northward by White Oak River, from the mouth to the Head thereof; and to the southward, by a creek that comes out of the Sound, and comes across New River Road, called the Bay Swamp, or Beasley's Creeks."¹⁰

Regarding slave labor, the 1820 federal census provided some interesting statistics which throw some light on the use of slave labor in Onslow. Out of a total of 3,604 slaves listed for the year, 2,217 were engaged in agriculture, 22 were engaged in commerce and 1,365 were engaged in manufacture. About 40 percent of the slaves, therefore, were engaged in non-agricultural

⁷Ibid., p. 97.

⁸Blackwell P. Robinson, The North Carolina Guide (Chapel Hill, 1955), p. 299. Joseph Parson Brown, in his The Commonwealth of Onslow: A History (New Bern, N. C., 1960), claimed that the county was formed in 1731. Bill Sharpe pointed out that the Colonial Assembly, protesting the creation of Onslow by Governor George Burrington's decree of May 23, 1731, "confirmed and established" the precincts of Onslow and Bladen on March 2, 1735. For Sharpe's account, see his "Onslow, The Big Change," The State, XXII (March 26, 1955), p. 19.

⁹David Leroy Corbitt, The Formation of the North Carolina Counties, 1603-1943 (Raleigh, 1950), p. 164.

¹⁰Walter Clark, ed., The State Records of North Carolina, 16 Vols. (Winston and Goldsboro, 1895-1914), XXII, p. 120.

pursuits. This percentage far exceeded the 5 percent of the total slave population of the South which Robert Starobin found employed in ante-bellum southern industries.¹¹

A family's strengths lie in those characteristics which enable the family to respond to the particular needs of household members and to the demands society places upon the family. Because blacks have had limited access to supportive social services, elderly blacks have relied a great deal on the supportive resources of their families, and families in turn have relied on elderly relatives. The practitioner should be sensitive to the fact that in the black experience the notion of family goes beyond those who live in a given household. In many black communities the family is not understood primarily in terms of those living in a particular building but is instead a kinship network.

One of the characteristics of the Black family that has been significant in its survival is the adaptability of family roles. (R. B. Hill, 1972). The roots for such adaptability reach into the African past, the black experience during slavery, and the socioeconomic conditions under which blacks live. Thus, the role of family head may shift at times from one person to another. It should not appear unusual for a Black family to be headed by a young mother and an aunt, or an aged mother, or an elderly couple or some other combination. Often a grandmother may be raising or helping to raise her grandchildren. She may be the person best suited to do so while the single parent works or attends school. Thus, adaptability has been essential. The maintenance of the family and the raising of children has been handled by the people who were available to do the job.

¹¹Census of 1820 (Washington, 1821), p. 26; Robert Starbin, Industrial Slavery in the Old South (New York, 1970), p. 11.

Another attribute of the Black family is the strong kinship bond. A sense of cohesiveness is a strength of the Black family, and an elderly person is often the focal point of that cohesiveness. One consequence of discrimination is that it has caused blacks to depend on each and to distrust the dominant society which would not accord them respect. The desire for dignity and freedom from oppression helps account for the black elderly person's reliance on the strong family bond. In addition, as Hobart C. Jackson, a black gerontologist, has pointed out, economic hardship has resulted in more closely knit family ties, and the minority elderly in general usually have more family members and non-family members living with them than do their white counterparts.

Thus, the black family, kinship ties have been sustained through religious values, economic necessity, and the mutual need for protection from the destructive consequences of racial injustice. Family members recognize and value the black elderly, because they have survived and surmounted many obstacles which the dominant culture has strewn in their path. In turn, the family frequently provides needed emotional support and understanding.

The value premise of our dominant society with its bias favoring the nuclear family has caused some to view the Black family as disorganized and unstable. Part of the assumption is that the two-parent family is the only correct model, an assumption which is simply not true. Implicit within the concept of the nuclear family is the idea of individualism and separateness rather than cooperation. The matter of cooperation and support has been crucial for the survival and strength of the Black family. In many instances, family and community networks have linked the various households in a supportive manner.

Black families, whether headed by two parents, one parent, or an elderly grandparent, can function effectively for the mutual benefit of family members.

Thus it becomes important that the practitioner assess his or her own biases about the Black family. The stability and well-being of the Black family cannot be judged merely by determining whether such a family mirrors the nuclear family of the dominant culture.¹²

Touch the mind and you touch the situation; put something on the mind of the receiver and you force him or her to confront their condition. At that point one has a choice, to work for their continued enslavement or to work to do and the building of the Black extended family institution is a necessary step and it will be done if we are to survive and grow. For as long as there is air to breathe, water to drink and the good earth provides us with food, clothing and shelter, there is nothing that Black people cannot do and the first step in doing anything is also the first step toward getting it done. Look at your children and you see yourself; our children above anything else are our impetus and we Black men and women are the change if change is to come.¹³

¹²Joseph Dancy. The Black Elderly. University of Michigan, 1977, pp. 20-22.

¹³Haki R. Madhubuti, Enemies: The Clash of Races. Third World Press, p. 53.

"A RECIPE FOR A HIP BLACK LIFE"

J. Morris Anderson

INGREDIENTS

5 cups Blackness	11 cups strong manhood
½ cup awareness	3 quarts Black History
10 cups pride	25 gallons persistence
5 cups confidence	30 gallons economic security
2 cups purpose and goal	30 gallons political power
11 cups natural womanhood	5 cups common sense

Have all ingredients at a soulful temperature.

Blend Blackness, awareness, pride, confidence

And relevant purpose to your goal.

Mix natural black womanhood with strong black manhood.

Beat in Black History. Stir in persistence.

Drain of all Uncle Toms.

Pour in economic security; sift in political power.

Mix well.

Bake in hot buttered soul. Sprinkle with common sense for flavor.

Serve while hot -- with a long handled spoon.

Serves 30 million Black brothers and sisters.

TEN STEPS IN ROOTING OUT THE PAST

by

Tommie M. Young, Ph. D.
North Carolina A. & T. State University

1. Start with yourself—Your name at birth, your given name; what your name represents. For whom were you named? Where were you born? Has your name changed; if so, what were the circumstances?
2. Talk with as many elderly persons as possible. Talk with grandparents and/or their friends and peers. Talk with children reared by grandparents or elderly relatives. (Elders often share with children when they are older and have more time for talking and reminiscing.)
3. Listen for key family names: surnames, nicknames, place names — any unfamiliar names in the family. (Elders often share with children when they are older and have more time for talking and reminiscing.)
4. Study family Bibles. Both bond and free persons may have legacies of Bibles. Search all Bibles from your county of origin maintained by persons with a surname the same or similar to your own, state libraries and archives, local public libraries and private collections may have collections of Bibles.
5. Read wills, deeds of property, and other estate papers of persons with surnames the same as yours and who lived and were slaveholders prior to 1865. Get a fix on the name of a person(s) and pursue that person through changes in locales, names, etc. Through him/her information on a forebearer and/or his family may be found. Tax lists, inventories, plantation worklogs, ration records, diaries, letters and personal journals often hold clues and document a forebearer.
6. Search one family line at a time. The temptation may persist to give equal time to both sides of the family. Start with your parents, if possible, move on to grandparents, etc., Census Reports, marriage records, vital statistics, church and cemetery records will be useful in this phase of your search.
7. Examine artifacts of forebearers. An old skillet, bonnet, quilt, pipe, quill, pot or miscellaneous items handed down may be a clue to your heritage. Get outside help in defining objects. Historians, archaeologist, or botanists may help.
8. Study photographs, Physical characteristics associated with a family may also be associated with an ancient tribe. Note anatomical structure of face; physical structure (short vs. tall, etc.). Observe background of photograph (is setting a studio or natural scene — is the scene rural or urban; how are subjects dressed, etc.?)

Ten Steps in Rooting Out the Past (continued)

9. Visit old plantation sited, slave quarters, cemeteries or burial grounds. Look for landmarks, carvings on walls and/or trees; examine utilitarian objects that are about. Follow-up visits to courthouses and archives for cemetery information.
10. Consult Federal sources of genealogical information. Records of black service men who fought in U. S. Wars; papers and lists of the Freedmens Bureau; birth, marriage, and death records; mortality schedules; land records and, personnel records are among sources in the National Archives

EXHIBIT A

African Genealogy

34

THE KINSHIP SYSTEM

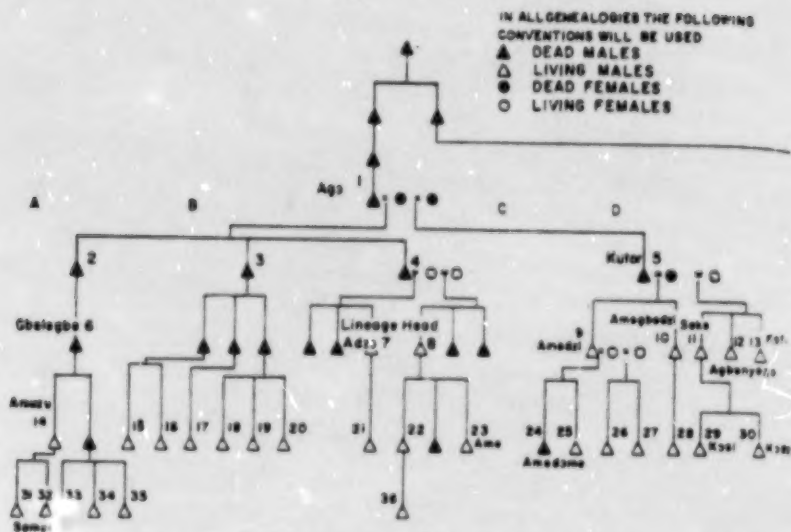


FIG. 1. Family clusters within a section of the Amelor lineage of Woe excluding women and children

I AM

You exist, Therefore you ARE

Your Name at Birth _____
FIRST MIDDLE LAST (Jr., II, Big, Little, etc.)

Your Name at Present _____

Your Nickname (if any) and/or Other Names by Which You are Known _____

Changes in Names that Have Occurred: Spelling Variations _____

Legal Changes by Circumstances of Marriage: _____

Aliases: _____

Date of Birth _____
Year Month Day Time Of Day

Place of Birth _____
Country State or Province City or Town

Name of Community (if any) Hospital or House Address Other

Attendants at your Birth _____
Doctor Nurse Midwife Other

Sex _____ Race _____ Social Security Number _____

Nation in which you were born: _____

Changes in Citizenship from that of Birth _____

What Races and Nationalities Dominate your ancestors _____

Parents: Father (Natural) _____

Where born and who are his people?

Mother (Natural) _____

Where born and who are her people?

Date of Parent's marriage _____ Where _____

FAMILY TREE CHART

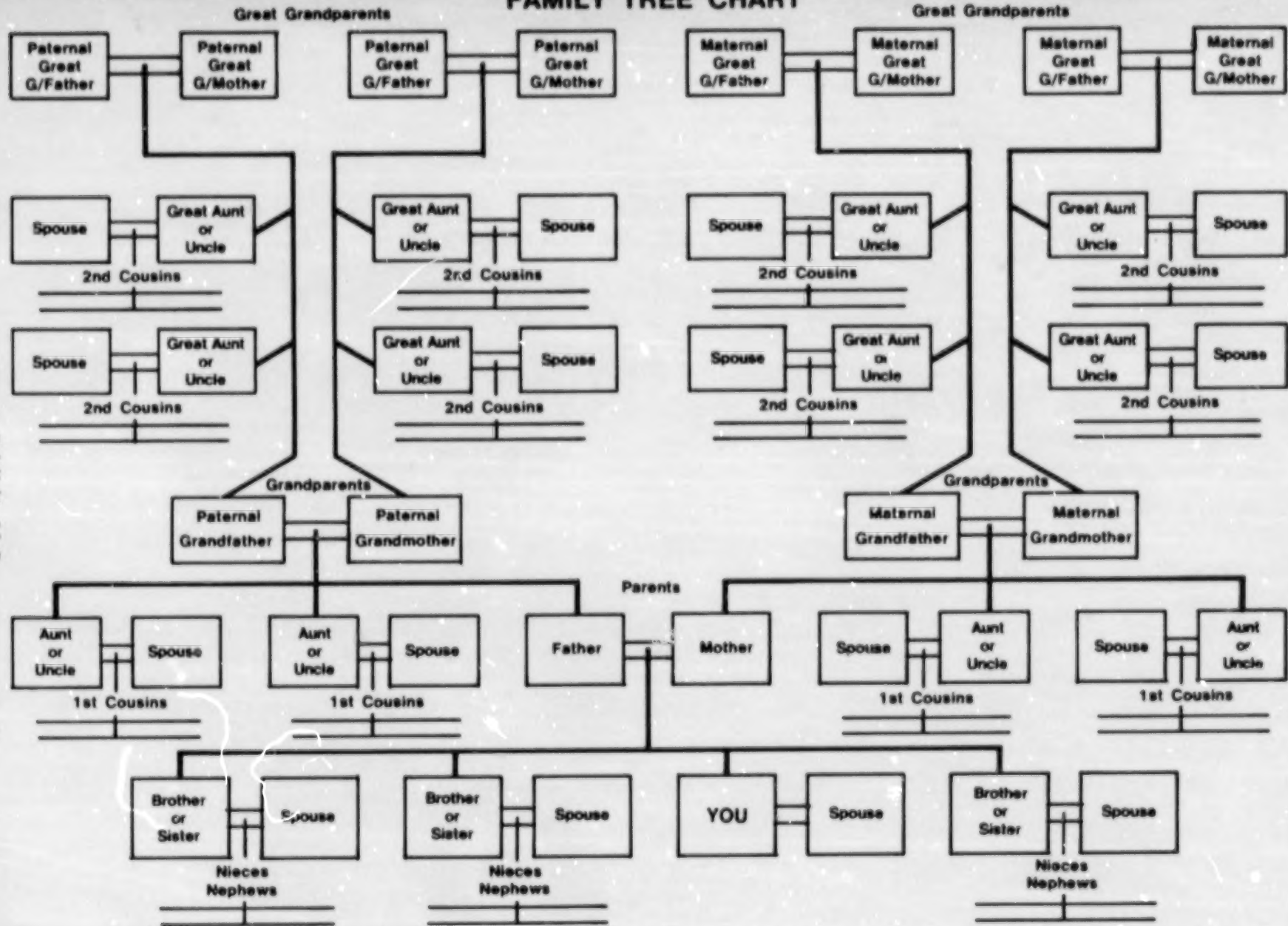


Exhibit 24-D

NORTH CAROLINA COUNTIES WITH SPECIAL GENEALOGICAL SOURCES ON BLACKS PRIOR TO
1865

Craven County
Civil and Criminal Actions

Duplin County
Marriage records (free blacks, 1860-)

Durham County
Marriage records (1898-)

Edgecombe County
Slave papers, 1780-1857

Granville County
Certificates of Marriage, 1851-58
Marriage of Freed People, 1866-67
Records of Slaves and Free Persons of Color, 1755-1854

Greene County
Marriages, 1875-1958

Guilford County
Marriage Licenses, 1872-1961
1867-1937

Lincoln County
Records of Freedmen, 1866

Mecklenburg County
Marriage records (Colored) 1850-67

Nash County
Division of Slaves
Marriage of Colored People and Division of Slaves, 1862-66
Slave records

New Hanover County
Slave Records, 1795-1864

North Hampton County
Slave Records, 1785-1867

Orange County
Negro Cohabitation, 1866-68
Slave Records, 1783-1865

Pasquotank County
Apprentice Bonds for Negroes, 1342-61

Perquimans County
Slave Records, 1759-1864

Randolph County
Records of Slaves and Free Persons of Color, 1788-1887

Rockingham County
Slave Records, 1803-60

Stokes County
Slave Records, 1806-60

Washington County
Freedmen's Marriage Records, 1866-72

Wayne County
Records of Slaves and Free Persons of Color, 1798-1869

Wilson County
Slave Records, 1855-64

AFRO-AMERICAN GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

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